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MEMOIRS

Relating to the late Famous

Mr. Tho. Brown.

With A

CATALOGUE

OF HIS

Library.

BRITISH MUSEUM

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LONDON,

Printed, and Sold by *B. Brag*, at the *Blue Ball* in *Ave-mary-Lane*, 1704.

(Price Six Pence.)

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(Price Bound 1s.)

THF

PREFACE.

I Hope (at leaſt) 'tis no Exception to a Man's Wit, for venturing to ſcribble in this Licentious Age, without pleading his Privilege; eſpecially to attempt the Character of one of the *Sons* of *Apollo*, when ſo many of the Fraternity lye idle, which makes it apparently ſtrange; that neither Malice, Neceſſity, nor good Nature (if Poets are allow'd to have any) has work'd a Treatiſe out of ſome hungry *Muſe* concerning a late departed Brother. Wherefore finding the Preſs open, and poor *Tom. Brown* among the number of the *Deceas'd*, I thought nothing cou'd be more proper (ſince no one elſe wou'd undertake it) than to ſay ſomething of him by way of Preface here. Not, Gentlemen, that I ſhall preſume to vindicate his Morals, nor flatter my ſelf with the Capacity of being able to deſcribe his Province of Senſe and Learning, but to ſpeak impartially between the two Extreams of a bad Life, and a good Wit: Had he been as happy in his Temper as in his *Genius*, he had certainly been hoiſted up among the Firſt-Rate *Wits* of his Time; his Lewdneſs had been no *Blot* in his Eſcutcheon there. 'Twas not *Tate*'s ſeeming Sanctity that prefer'd him to the Bayes, nor *Congreve*'s Chaſtity to the Opinion of the *Quality*: *Shadwell* had never been Laureat in his latter days, but by being an early Rake, and fixing his Reputation with *D------t*, *S-------y* and the reſt. It was not *Vanbrookes* modeſt Plays that rais'd his Eſteem among the Ladies, nor *Motteux* Pretence of being a perſecuted Brother, that exalted him from a Solitary Garret, to the Reputation of a current Credit upon Change, and a Place in the Poſt-Office. *Row* had ſhewn more Wit in keeping his Eſtate, than he has ſhewn Morality in all the Plays he e're writ, (eſpecially the laſt) and certainly Mr. *Tarquahar* knew how neceſſary Lewd-

neſs was to eſtabliſh his Reputation, when he expos'd *Roe-buck* in the firſt Play he writ for his own Character. So that I think 'tis demonſtrative it was not *Tom. Brown*'s Immorality that hinder'd him from climbing to the top Round of Poetry and Preferment; but that he had a particular mean way of Sinning to himſelf; to ſpeak it plainer, he had leſs the Spirit of a Gentleman than the reſt, and more of a Scholar. *Tom* thought himſelf as happy with a Retailer of Damnation in an obſcure Hole, as another to've gone to the Devil with all the Splendour of a fine Equipage. 'Twas not the Brightneſs of *Celia*'s Eyes, nor her Gaudy Trappings, that attracted his Heart. *Cupid* might keep his *Darts* to himſelf, *Tom.* always carried his *Fire* about him; if ſhe had but a Mouth, two Eyes and a Noſe, he never enquir'd after the Regularity of her Dreſs, or her Features; he always brought a good Stomach with him, and fell too with little Ceremony; and I'm apt to think that what made his Appetite the keener, was, that he always paid dear for his *Ordinary*. 'Twas the ſame thing in his Converſation, *Tom.* was never very curious in the Choice of his Friends, which made him ſometimes keep very indifferent Company, the firſt thing that beats down a Man's Reputation. Some People wonder he never Stampt his Image upon a piece of Dramatick Poetry, which for my part I'm not loſt in at all; for I'm apt to think his Wit would not have paſs'd current there, having never refin'd his Converſation from the Oar, to the Standard Value of a *Theatre*, which requires a Man to keep the moſt Gentile Company, and make the deepeſt Remarks from the beſt People. *Tom.* wou'd better have deſcrib'd the Evolutions of a *Darby* Ale-houſe, than have expos'd the *Intrigues* and *Amours* of the *Belles* and *Baux*, or to draw that in a Play, which he *was* never *ſo much as* converſant with in his whole Life, --- *a fine Gentleman, and a fine Lady*; nor indeed that he ever coveted to Converſe with. But certainly in that *Road* of *Poetry* which he Travelled, no Man outwent him; for he was an excellent *Satyriſt*, witty upon all occaſions. He was of a Lazy Temper, as he confeſt himſelf in his *Dying Words*, and indeed it was ſo great a Truth, that he might have ſpar'd the Labour to have ſpoke of it there, for 'tis not to be queſtion'd, but that the *Bookſellers* wou'd have done him the Juſtice to have ſatisfied the World of that. *Tom.* had Credit enough among 'em, as to his Capacity, but little to his Performance. He was a very ill Huſband of his Wit, and when he might have made Advantage of prompt Payments, let it run to Intereſt, and always brought his *Muſe* in Debt. He was very diverting facetious Company, yet he had often his Intervals of Dulneſs, and was ſometimes as indifferent Company as any Man; he was of a Humour Extravagant and Vain, and wou'd

have

have ſpent the *Indies*, had he been poſſeſt of it; beſides, (tho' he was good Natur'd enough) he wou'd not ſtick to abuſe the beſt Friend he had for his Jeſt ſake, as appears by what he wittily writ in anſwer to one who had lent him a Shirt and a Suit of Linnen, demanding 'em again.

Two Shirts are one to many for a Cit,
Dividing Stakes, you know, is juſt and fit:
Don't then complain, and ſay you're Chous'd and Bit,
Leſt in Revenge I ſend it home beſhit,
Or keep it ſtill to teach a Fool more Wit.

Another of his *Lampoons* had like to've coſt him a Proceſſion at the Carts-Arſe, nor indeed did he ſpare any, either Friend or Foe, if the Megrim of Wit took him in the Head; he had a moſt particular Genius to *Scandal* and *Satyr*, and dealt 'em out liberally when he could find occaſion: He is fam'd for being the Author of a *Libel* fix'd on a Sunday Morning upon the Doors of *Weſtminſter*-Abbey, and for many other things he writ againſt the *Clergy*, and the *Quality*, and indeed for many more I believe that he had no hand in.

But he that once a good Name gets,
May Piſs in Bed, and ſay he Sweats.

For *Tom.* wou'd be Witty, tho' at the ſame time he lay under the Inconvenience of it, as your pert *Citty Wits*, that will rather loſe their Cuſtomer than their Jeſt. As for *Religion*, *Tom* underſtood the World better than to have any, at leaſt to profeſs it in open ſhew; for certainly 'twou'd be a great Mortification to any of our *Men* of *Wit*, ſhou'd they believe themſelves branded with the Name of Righteouſneſs; and the World to be even with 'em, really think 'em all *Atheiſts*; not that they're ſo much in Opinion as Affectation, and wou'd be glad to have Religion at an eaſie rate, leſs than the Price of their Pleaſure, or their Reputations; for they can no more perſwade themſelves againſt the Neceſſity of it, than other People to believe they have any Value at all for the *Church*: (*) Death ſounds their Inclination beſt, and when he once brings 'em into Shoal-water, you will infallibly diſcover their Principles.

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* *Sailors have a way to ſtick Tallow at the bottom of their Lead, when they are near Sands, and by the Gravel it brings up, know what whereabouts they are.*

This

This was apparently true by *Tom. Brown*, who cou'd discover that at his Death, which he was a Stranger to all his Life: I fancy this made his *Brethren* neglect him when he died, and deny him the *Rites* of Verse, that had derogated from the Profession of their *Faith*. Nor cou'd his Fame raise him above a *Grubstreet Press*, tho' out of the common Stile, one of 'em says thus,

---- *A mournful* Muse *from* Albion *Swains produce,*
Sad as the Song, a gloomy Genius chuse,
In artful Numbers let his Wit be shown,
And as he Sings of Dorons, *speak his own;*
Such be the Bard, *for only such is fit,*
To trace pale Doron *thro' the Fields of Wit.*

However these Lines came into a Penny *Elegy*, they're better than I have seen for a greater Price, and what I find none else wou'd bestow on him. I was never very curious to enquire into his Family, nor ever heard farther than that he was the Son of a sufficient Tradesman, (some say a *Tanner*) at *Newport* in *Shropshire*, who being wise enough to fathom his Son's Aptness to Wit and Learning, thought of sending him to *Oxford*, of which take his own Words, tho' never yet in Print: Having design'd once to write sometning of himself, he began thus:

" 'Tis impossible for a Man to live in this World, not be Interested
" in the Affairs on't one way or other, and the best way of Guidance, is,
" to walk with the Advice of our nearest Relations and Cordial Friends:
" To these I submitted in their Choice of my Education, having precon-
" sulted my natural Willingness to Learning, and a suitable Aptness to
" imitate that *Study* they design'd me for: At Fifteen, with the usual
" Accomplishments of a Country School, where *Lilly*, *Ovid*, *Terrence*, *Virgil*,
" and a few more of those Learned Gentlemen had pass'd my Cognizance,
" I was at least judg'd fit for the University; and so with a Blessing, a
" few Tears, Ten Pounds and two Suits of Cloaths, I set out for *Oxford*,
" where I flew a while at *Philosophy*, intending to spread my Wings over
" the Doctrine of the *Gospel*; but the stiff Rules of *College* Govern-
" ment, and the austere Occonomocy of a Rigid *Tutor*, soon made me
" weary of a *Square-Cap* and Confinement; and a more free and lively
" Imagination interceded my Integrity to Learning. In short I found a
" prevailing Inclination in me to see the Town; and from my first en-
" tertaining those thoughts, my Study grew uneasie to me, so that ha-

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" ving appropriated a Sum of Money design'd for another Use, I set
" out for *London*: My first Business was to apply my self to those few
" Friends I had there, who depending I had left the University, exclu-
" sive of my Father's Knowledge, gave but slender Encouragement to a
" young Beginner: However, no whit daunted, (my first Resolution still
" standing by me) I Launch'd forth into the World, committing my self
" to the Mercy of Fortune, and the uncertain Tempests of the Town;
" I soon aquir'd a new Set of Acquaintance, and began to have a Relish
" of what I had only tasted before by Hearsay; and indeed every thing
" serv'd to convince me I had chang'd for the better, except that my
" slender Substance began to wast extreamly; and ruminating with all
" the Difficulty of obtaining a Supply, I was then laid under the Ne-
" cessity of thinking what Course to Steer. I knew how justly I had
" incurr'd the Displeasure of an Indulgent Father, and how far I had put
" my self from retrieving his Favour, the only way it seem'd likely,
" besides my Inclination held still the Supremacy of my Duty that
" way. Amidst this serious Contemplation, I resolv'd to go through
" stich with my Enterprize, let what wou'd come on't: However, that I
" might use Discretion to palliate an unforeseen Event, I determin'd
" 'twere better to trust to the Flexibility of a Father's Temper, than to
" lay too great a Stress upon the Humanity of Fortune, who wou'd let
" a Man of Morals Starve, if he depended upon her Favours: Therefore,
" without more adoe, (having taken my sorrowful Leave of my last
" Guinea, and reduc'd *Carolus Secundus* from a whole Number, into Deci-
" mal Fractions) I dispatch'd a Letter into the Country, full of Excuse
" and Penitence, baited with all the submissive Eloquence imaginable. In
" the mean time I was no less sedulous in employing my Care to find
" out some Employment that might suit with my Genius; and indeed
" with the Dependancies I might have from Home.

This being all that relates to that Affair, I shall omit the rest, it being design'd to be Printed elsewhere.

'Tis observable here, that writing of himself, he skips his being a *Servi-tore* of *Christ-Church*, and the many little Tricks he play'd at *Oxford*: And I suppose was not come to his being School-master of *Kingston* upon *Thames*, nor does he assert the Reasons of his quitting that Employment; which is not my Business to take notice of here.

Falling into Diſcourſe one Day of *Tom. Brown*, a Gentleman produc'd the following Letter, and the Epiſtle before it in Manuſcript; and render'd it to my Peruſal, ſo that having read it, I eaſily perſwaded the Perſon to ſubmit to my Project of Printing it.

Tom. Brown to his Friends among the Living.

Gentlemen,

I *Bear it with no little Concern to find my ſelf ſo ſoon forgot among ye; I have paid as conſtant Attendance to Poſt-Hours, in Expectation to hear from ye, as a hungry* Iriſh-Man *(at Twelve) to a Three-Penny* Ordinary, *or a decay'd* Beau *for nice Eating to a Roaſting-Cook's. No Amorous-keeping Fool, baniſh'd from his* Chloris *in* Town, *to his Country Sollitude, has waited with greater Impatience for a kind Epiſtle from her, than I for one from you. I have ſearch'd all private Packets, and examin'd every ſtragling* Ghoſt *that came from your Parts, without being able to get the leaſt Intelligence of your Affairs. This is the third ſince my Arrival in theſe Gloomy Regions, and I can give my ſelf no Reaſon why I have received none in anſwer, unleſs the* Packet-Boat *has been taken by the* French, *or that ſo little time has quite excluded me from your Memories. In my firſt I gave you an Account of my Journey hither, and my Reception among the Ingenious in theſe Gloomy Regions.*

I arriv'd on the Banks *of* Acheron, *and found* Charon *ſcooping his Wherry, who ſeeing me approach him, bid me ſit down a little, for he had been hard work'd lately, and cou'd not go with a ſingle Paſſenger: I was willing enough to embrace the Propoſal, being much fatiegu'd and weary. Having finiſh'd what he was about, he caſt his rueful Aſpect up to the Clouds; and demonſtrating from thence (as I ſuppoſe) it was near Dinner-time, he took from out a Locker or Cupboard in the Stern of his Pinnace, ſome Provinder pinn'd up in a clean Linnen Clout, and a Jack of Liquor, and fell too without the leaſt ſhew of Ceremony, unleſs indeed it were to offer me the Civility of partaking with him. He mutter'd ſomething to himſelf, which might be Grace as far as I know; but if it were, 'twas as ſhort as*

that

that at an Auction-*Dinner, nor did he devour what was before him with leſs Application than I have ſeen ſome there. For my part, I could not but contemplate on his ſhaggy Locks, his wither'd Sun-burnt Countenance, together with the Mightineſs and Sanctity of his Beard; but above all, his brawny chopt Knuckles employ'd my Attention: In ſhort, having ſatisfied the Cormorant in his Guts, he had time to ask me* what Country-Man I was? *to which I ſubmiſſively anſwer'd,* An *Engliſh-Man*: O, *ſays he*, thoſe *Engliſh-Men* are merry Rogues, and love Miſchief; I have ſometimes a diverting Story from thence: What News have you brought with you? *Truly I told his Highneſs I came away a little diſſatisfied, and had not made any Remarks on the World for ſome time before my Death; and for News, I had not leiſure to bring any thing of moment. But ere we'd talk'd much more, we ſaw two other Paſſengers approach us; who by their often turning to one another, and their laying down Arguments with their Hands, ſeem'd to be in warm Debate together; which was as we conjectur'd; for when they drew nearer to us, they prov'd to be a Termagant* High-Flyer, *and a Puritanical* Scripturian, *a fiery* Scotch-Man: Occaſional Conformity *was their Subject, for I heard the* Scot *tell him* 'twas all Popery, downright Popery, and that the Inquiſition in *Spain* was Chriſtianity to it, by retarding the Sons of Grace from partaking of the Gifts of the Lord; *he ſaid* 'twas the Building of *Babel*, and they were confounded in the Works of their Hands by the Confuſion of Tongues; ſuch Crys, *ſays he*, went forth before the Deſolation of the Great City.

Thou the Son of Grace, *ſays the other*, thou art a Son of Satan, and haſt preach'd up Iniquity; ye are the evil Tares, and the Land can never proſper till ye are rooted out from among the good Corn.

Thou art an Inventer of Lies, *ſaid the Diſciple of* John Calvin, and the Truth is not in thee; ye are Bloody-minded Wretches, and your Fury is the only Sign of your Religion, as the Steeple is to the Church; your Organs are the prophane Tinkling of the Cymbals of Satan, that tickle the Ears with Vanity.

Thus the Diſpute laſted till they came to us, and getting into the Boat, *they joſtled for Pre-eminence, which might have prov'd a ſharp Conflict, had not the Old Fellow took up a Stretcher and parted 'em. After which we paſs'd peaceably over to the other ſide: Being Landed, the* Scot *and I took our way together, and left the furious Church-man to vent his Spleen by himſelf. We had not Travell'd long before we came to a populous* Village, *where from the various* Multitude, *our Eyes encounter'd at a diſtance, we might eaſily conjecture that ſomething more than ordinary had gather'd 'em together in that manner; it reſembled (as near as I can*

deſcribe

describe it) that famous Place call'd Sherrick-Fair, or a Staffordshire-Wake: While we were applying our Admiration that way, we arrived at a small Hut erected for the purpose, where Nero the Tyrant, like a Blind Fidler, was surrounded by a confus'd Tribe of all Sorts and Sexes, like another Orpheus among the Beasts.

The various Remarks I made, (some Dancing, some Prancing; some Clapping, some Knapping; some Drinking, some Winking; some Kissing, some P---sing; some Reeling, some Stealing;) urg'd my Curiosity to enquire for what it was possible those Noble Sports might be ordain'd, and was soon satisfy'd it was the Anniversary Feast of their Great Lady Proserpine's Birth Day. But these things that I took to be diverting, so elevated the Spleen of my Puritan Companion, that he began loudly to exclaim against those Prophane Exercise: He said, They were impure, and lifted up the Mind to Lewdness; that those that follow'd 'em, were the Sons of Belial, and wore the Mark of the Beast in their Foreheads. I endeavour'd to pacify the Sanctify'd Brother, by putting him in mind where we were, and that his Rashness might draw us into Danger, being in a strange Place; but all was in vain, I but stirr'd up his Fury more; for, turning his Rebukes upon me, he told me, I was my self one of the Wicked, and did Rejoyce in my Heart at the Deeds of Darkness: No, says he, I will not be pacify'd, I will Roar aloud to drown their Incantations; yea, I will set out a Throat even as the Beast that Belloweth! So that perceiving the Mob gather about him, I thought it Prudence to steal off, and leave him to the Fury of those, whose Displeasure he was about to incur.

I had not gone far, but I 'spy'd two Brawney Champions at a Rubbers of Cuffs, which by the Dexterity of their Heads, Hands, and Heels, I judg'd cou'd be no other than English-Men: Nor were my Sentiments groundless; for presently I heard the Mob cry out, O! rare Jo! O! rare Jo! and attentively surveying the Combatants, I found it to be the Merry Jo. Haynes, fall'n out with Plowden the Famous Lawyer, about a Game at Nine-Holes; and that Shout had proclaim'd Jo. Victorious. I was something scrupulous of renewing my Acquaintance, not knowing how the Conqueror, in the midst of his Success, might use me for making bold with his Character in my Letters from the Dead, tho' I felt a secret Desire to discover my self, yet Prudence withstood my Inclination, till a more convenient Season might offer: So that I brush'd off to a place where I saw a Concourse of the better sort of People; there I found Millington the famous Auctioner, among a Crowd of Lawyers, Physicians, Schollars, Poets, Criticks, Booksellers, &c. exercising his old Faculty; for which, Gentlemen, he is as particularly fam'd in these Parts, as Herostratus for Firing the famous Temple, or Barthol. Swarts, for the Invention of Gun-Powder. He is Head

Journey-

Journey-Man to Ptolomy, *who keeps a* Bookſeller's Shop *here, and Rivals even* J....b T....n *in* Reputation *among the great Wits.*

But moſt of all I was oblig'd to admire my Friend Millington, *who by his powerful Knack of Eloquence, to the Wonder of the whole Company, ſold* Cave's Lives of the Fathers *to* Solomon *the Magnificent, and the* Scotch Directory to the Prieſts of the Sun; *nay, he ſold* Archbiſhop *Laud's* Life *to Hugh Peters,* Hob's Leviathan *to* Pope Boniface, *and Top'd* Bunyan's Works *upon* Bellarmine *for a piece of unreveal'd* Divinity. *After the* Sale *was over, I took an Opportunity of making my ſelf known to him, who carreſs'd me with all the Freedom imaginable, asking me,* How long I had been in theſe Parts? *and* What News from the other World? *and a Thouſand particular Queſtions about his old Friends; to all which I reſponded as well as I cou'd: And having given me a Caution to avoid ſome People, by whom I was threatned, for expoſing them in my Letters, we went to take a Bottle together; where among other things, I ask'd him if he had not good a Stock of Modern* Engliſh *Books, and to my great Wonder, he ſhew'd me the following* Catalogue, *which I have ſent for your Peruſal.*

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When

WHen a Scurvy Diſeaſe had lain hold of my Carcaſe,
And *Death* to my Chamber was mounting the Stair-caſe,
I call'd to Remembrance the Sins I'd committed,
Repented, and thought I'd for Heaven been fitted;
But alas! there is ſtill an old *Proverb* to croſs us,
I found there no Room for the Sons of *Parnaſſus*;
And therofore contented like others to fare,
To the Shades of *Elizium* I ſtrait did repair;
Where *Dryden* and other great Wits o' th' Town,
To reward all their Labours, are damn'd to Write on.
Here *Johnſon* may boaſt of his Judgment and Plot,
And *Otway* of all the Applauſe that he got,
Looſe *Eth'ridge* preſume on his Stile and his Wit,
And *Shadwell* of all the dull Plays he e'er writ;

Nat. Lee here may boaſt of his Bombaſt and Rapture,
And *Buckingham* rail to the end of the Chapter;
Lewd *Rocheſter* Lampoon the King and the Court,
And *Sidby* and others may cry him up for't;
Soft *Waller* and *Suckling*, chaſt *Cowley* and others,
With *Beaumont* and *Fletcher*, Poetical Brothers,
May here Scribble on with Pretence to the Bays,
E'en *Shakeſpear* himſelf may produce all his Plays,
And not get for whole Pages one Mouth full of Praiſe.

To avoid this Diſaſter, let *C-----ve* reform,
His Muſe and his Morals fly to *B-----s* Arms;
Let *V-----k* no more Plotleſs Plays e'er impoſe,
Stuft with Satyr and Smut to ruin the Houſe;
Let *R-----w*, if he means to maintain his Applauſe,
Write no more ſuch Lewd Plays as his *Penitent* was.
O Satyr! from Errors inſtruct the Wild Herd,
Beſtow thy Advice to reclaim each Lewd Bard;
Bid the Laureat ſincerely reflect on the Matter;
Bid *D-----s* drink leſs, but bid him write better;

Bid

Bid *D-----y* ceaſe Scribbling, that Libelling Songſter;
Bid *G-----n* and *C-----n* be Deiſts no longer;
Bid *B-----r* and *C------r*, thoſe Wits of the Age,
Ne'er expoſe a dull Coxcomb, but juſt on the Stage;
Bid *F-----r* (tho' bit) to his Conſort be juſt,
And *M------x* in his Office be true to his Truſt;
Bid *D------t* and *C------r* no louger be Mad,
But Parſons and Lawyers mind each their own Trade:
To *Grubſter* and others, bold Satyr advance;
Bid *A------fe* talk little, and *P-----s* talk Senſe;
Bid *K-----n* leave Stealing as well as the reſt;
When this can be done, they may hope to be Bleſt.

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